

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: October 31, 1962

SUBJECT: Cuba; Arms Control; Disarmament

PARTICIPANTS:

W. W. Rostow, Counselor and Chairman of the Policy Planning Council

COPIES TO: The Secretary ARA
 The Under Secretary ✓ S/AL - Amb. Thompson
 G - Mr. Johnson ACDA
 M - Mr. McGhee White House - Mr. Bundy
 EUR Defense - Mr. Nitze
 INR - Mr. Hilsman CIA - Mr. Cline S/P

At the Finnish Embassy, [] were among the guests. After dinner, in the presence of the Swedish Ambassador, [] said: "Do you think we can now make progress on disarmament?" I replied that this was our hope; but there is one thing that the USSR must bear in mind. Every nation has its own deep memories which color its foreign policy, rationally or otherwise. For the Soviet Union there are the memories of recurrent invasion from the west, notably from Germany. For the US there is the memory of Pearl Harbor. Without any judgment concerning Soviet intentions, it was important that those responsible for Soviet policy understand that the reassurances of Gromyko to the President about offensive weapons in Cuba, coming at a time when they were in fact being installed, touched a deep nerve among Americans. They must count on a very powerful insistence from the US on effective inspection in any arms control and disarmament arrangements. (B)(1)(5) (a)(5)

He then said, "Do you really mean there were fears here of a Pearl Harbor?" I said that, in the sense I had just indicated, there were. He then turned to the Swedish Ambassador, Mr. Jarring, and said,

and said, "I have known you for ten years: is what Rostow says true?" The Swedish Ambassador said that he could confirm exactly. [] said, "this is very important".

[] went on to say, "What do you think of a test ban monitored by stations emplaced within the USSR and elsewhere without international personnel?" I said that I was in no position to make a judgment about the adequacy of methods for inspecting underground tests; but I was confident that, if we entered a test ban, including underground tests, the President would have to be assured that the risks of violation were very low.

In a lighter vein I told him that [] had said that our 30% arms cut was an inadequate beginning; that he was much more conservative than his scientific colleague. He replied that we had to begin to turn down the arms race urgently at some point and perhaps the more modest step of a test ban, including underground tests, was the place to begin.